



6 December 2023

## **Annual meeting of Three Commissions held in Dublin**

The third annual meeting of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, was held today in Dublin.

The meeting is important in progressing the three Commissions' joint work in relation to Article 2 of the Windsor Framework, and in protecting and promoting human rights and equality on the island of Ireland after Brexit.

The Commissions were delighted to launch their second joint activity report today and reaffirmed their commitment to work closely together within their respective roles and remits.

Sinéad Gibney, Chief Commissioner, IHREC, Geraldine McGahey OBE, Chief Commissioner ECNI and Alyson Kilpatrick, Chief Commissioner, NIHRC, said in a joint statement:

“Equality and human rights protections are the basic building blocks for a peaceful and prosperous society on our shared island. They are central to the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement.

“We must continue to work together to ensure that those of us living both North and South enjoy an equivalence of equality and human rights standards. This is particularly important as we face the uncertainty and challenges of a post-Brexit world.

“The three Commissions look forward to continuing to work together in discharging our mandates to promote and protect human rights and equality for everyone on the island of Ireland.”

Note to editors:

- Please see link to the second annual joint report of IHREC, ECNI and NIHRC on the implementation of Article 2 of the Windsor Framework “[Equality and Human Rights on the Island of Ireland after Brexit](#)”

## **Overview of the Commissions**

**The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC)** is an independent public body, appointed by the President of Ireland and directly accountable to the Oireachtas. The Commission has a statutory remit set out under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014) to protect and promote human rights and equality in Ireland, and build a culture of respect for human rights, equality and intercultural understanding in the State. It is Ireland's national human rights institution and is also the national equality body for the purpose of a range of EU anti-discrimination measures. It is accredited as an 'A-Status' National Human Rights Institution by the United Nations.

**The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC)** is a non-departmental public body established following the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and pursuant to the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The NIHRC is a National Human Rights Institution with 'A-Status' accreditation from the United Nations.

**The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI)** is a non-departmental public body with powers and duties that derive from the anti-discrimination legislation in Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Schedule 3 of the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020 confers new functions on both the NIHRC and ECNI to enable them to act as part of the 'dedicated mechanism' (DM), to monitor, advise, report on and enforce the UK's adherence to Article 2 of The Windsor Framework commitment that there will be no diminution of rights, safeguards or equality of opportunity in Northern Ireland as a result of the UK's exit from the EU.

NIHRC, ECNI and IHREC work together to provide oversight of, and reporting on, rights and equalities issues falling within the scope of the commitment that have an island of Ireland dimension.

To find out more about the UK Government's commitment under Article 2 of The Windsor Framework or about making a complaint in the event of an alleged breach of this commitment, please contact the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland [www.equalityni.org/brexit](http://www.equalityni.org/brexit)